REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and examination of the present patent application.

The drawing stands objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) because it fails to show "component descriptions in full recitation" as described in the specification. Accordingly, the drawing has been amended to include full recitations of terms provided in the specification.

The disclosure stands objected to because embedded hyperlinks and/or other form of browser-executable code is contained therein. In accordance with M.P.E.P. §608.01, the specification has been amended to remove such recitations.

Claims 1 and 30 have been amended to more clearly define applicants' invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the changes to the claims make explicit that which applicants believe to be already implicit and, therefore, are not made for statutory purposes related to patentability.

Claims 1-10, 14-28 and 30-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Krellenstein (U.S. Patent No. 5,924,090). Further, claims 11-13 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Krellenstein in view of Mockett et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US2001/0037359). Reconsideration is requested in view of the amendments to the claims herein and the following remarks.

The technology and world of computers have explosively developed to the point that literally hundreds of millions of people throughout the world utilize Internet search engines. Typically, one or more key words or phrases connected by Boolean conditions returns lists of search results to users. Unfortunately, a great deal of information stored on the Internet cannot be readily categorized, and it is therefore very difficult to successfully locate such information using prior art search engines or categorization systems. Also, searchers using prior art search engines are frequently deluged with thousands references that are off-point, irrelevant and/or redundant. Alternatively, searchers narrow search terms such that too few search results are returned. In either case, the desired information is often not located by the searcher.

The present invention dramatically improves shortcomings of prior art search engines and categorization systems by enabling modifying and supplementing search categories and search

attributes interactively and to a degree automatically, by both listers and searchers. Applicants' claim 1, as amended, is directed to an interactive system for "enhancing the searchability of data[.]" More particularly, claim 1 defines "a categorization system," a "communication system" and a "cooperative facility." The categorization system "associates search terms defining categories or attributes with items to be found[.]" The communication system communicates with the categorization system and with "a store of information from which information is to be selected based on the search terms[.]" The cooperative facility is "associated" with the categorization system and "enables users, including listers and searchers, to interactively and at least partially automatically, modify or supplement the search terms initially assigned to the items to be found by the categorization system[.]" The categorization system, the communication system and the cooperative facility "are structured to store the modified or supplemented search terms."

Claim 30, as amended, is a method for searching data items in a data store, and includes functionally similar limitations. Thus, as defined in applicants' claims 1 and 30, as amended, searching of information and data is enhanced because listers and searchers can modify or supplement the search terms associated with items to be found.

Krellenstein is directed to a categorization system that includes searching a database of records and organizing results of the search into a set of most relevant categories. Krellenstein's methodology has three primary steps: identifying candidate categories, weighing candidate categories and displaying a set of search result categories selected from the candidate categories (column 3, lines 11-16). Each record within a database is classified according to various meta-data attributes (for example, subject, type, source, and language characteristics) and are automatically classified "by a classification system into the proper categories" (see Abstract). The categories are graphically represented such that a "few mouse clicks" enables the records that are most relevant to be retrieved.

Applicants respectfully submit that "search terms," as defined in applicants' claim 1 is distinct from "search terms" described in Krellenstein. "Search terms" in applicants' claim 1 define categories or attributes with items to be found. Krellenstein's use of "search terms" refers to queries that are submitted by a user to perform a search (see column 5, lines 55-62). Thus,

Krellenstein's search terms are used by searchers to reference categories in order to locate information, and do not represent categories associated with items.

Applicants respectfully submit that Krellenstein does not teach or suggest a cooperative facility associated with a categorization system that enables listers and searchers to interactively modify or supplement search terms initially assigned to items to be found by the categorization system. No modification or supplement to search terms, as defined in applicants' claim 1, is provided by Krellenstein. Applicants' claim 1, in contrast, enables listers and searchers to modify or supplement search terms that define categories that are associated with items to be found.

The Examiner cites to column 5, lines 4-41 for supporting the position that Krellenstein teaches a cooperative facility associated with the categorization system that enables users to modify or supplement search terms assigned to items to be found by the categorization system. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's characterization of this passage. According to this passage, a user can only narrow a search by providing "additional search terms (i.e., a refine instruction)" (see column 5, lines 34-35 and Fig. 2). Furthermore, as shown in Figs. 3a-3c, search field 62 receives queries from a user for initiating a search. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that the passage recited by the Examiner does not teach or suggest applicants' cooperative facility, as defined in applicants' claim 1.

Inasmuch as Krellenstein does not at all address the key concern and does not provide the solution in accordance with the present invention, it is respectfully submitted that Krellenstein in no way can be said to anticipate or even come close to rendering obvious any of the independent claims of the present application.

The dependent claims in the application include all of the limitations of their base, independent claims and impose further limitations thereon which distances them even further from the prior art.

Therefore, since Krellenstein fails to appreciate, disclose or teach the basic concept or solution of the present invention, neither does the combination of that basic reference with a secondary Mockett et al. reference which the Office Action utilized.

For the reasons set forth, applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance, for which action is earnestly solicited.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on December 2, 2004:

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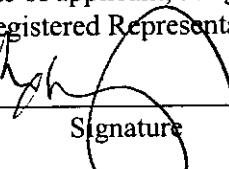
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Respectfully submitted,
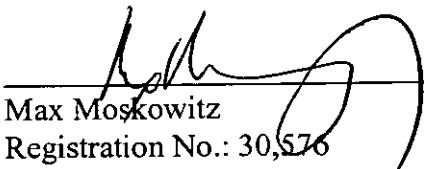
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